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ABSTRACT

Examining the one-child-per-family movement (OCFM) in China using Lloyd Bitzer's "Functional Communication: A Situational Perspective," this essay provides insight into how rhetoric has functioned and is functioning in this difficult situation. A brief geographic review provides a basis for understanding the complex set of problems surrounding the OCFM. Traditional beliefs concerning male offspring and old age are shown to constitute the most powerful threat to the movement. The OCFM is then discussed in terms of four categories proposed by Bitzer to extend his original formulation of the "evolution of situation": (1) origin and development of constituents--describing the development of the OCFM in China since the early 1970s, particularly the establishment of the State Family Planning Commission; (2) maturity--depicting the role of the Chinese government as the movement developed, focusing on the extensive planned parenthood regulations; (3) deterioration--recounting the problems that led to the breakdown of the movement in the 1980s, such as rising female infanticide rates and strong resistance from rural areas where economic factors encourage large families; and (4) revitalization--documenting a two-fold strategy for renewing the movement: emphasis on publicity and mass education, including improving the status of women in society, and a softening of the incentive program. (JD)

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THE ONE-CHILD-PER-FAMILY MOVEMENT IN CHINA: AN ANALYSIS OF SITUATIONAL RHETORIC

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Introduction

Since the publication of Leland Griffin's, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements" in 1952, social movements have become the focus of numerous rhetorical studies; over 200 have been published since 1965.[1] Ironically, this expansive body of literature has led to greater critical conjecture than consensus. As theorists have struggled to conceptualize, critics have struggled to implement useful constructs in the criticism of social movements. While theorists have failed to provide a framework with strong utility for the critic, they have not failed to recognize the problem. Cathcart addressed the problem in 1972 when he called for the development of "appropriate tools."[2] Wilkinson made a similar observation noting that "rhetoricians are still struggling to establish adequate methodologies."[3] Recently, Suzanne Volmar Riches and Malcom O. Sillars published an exhaustive review and classification of movement studies which concluded that movement studies do not truly exist; what are currently categorized as such "represent no clear definition, form or methodology."[4]

Scholars have also suggested research avenues for clarifying and unifying social movement theory. Some of the most insightful and pragmatic suggestions are presented by Stephen E. Lucas in "Coming to Terms with Movement Studies."[5] Lucas suggests that the historians, sociologists and rhetoricians all make valuable contributions to the study of movements. He contends that critics would spend greater effort viewing the interrelated factors which affect movements. In priorities for further study, Lucas emphasizes the need to develop a body of criticism that analyzes movements outside our own culture. He notes that previous literature deals almost exclusively with movements in America or Great Britain and that "the social, political and religious values, as well as the rhetorical traditions and praxes of Anglo-America are not necessarily those of other Western nations." He further charges, "We should know much more than we do about the rhetoric of such movements as the French, Russian and Chinese revolutions . . . "[6]

This call for cross-cultural examination of social movements provides an impetus for this undertaking, specifically, an analysis of the One Child Per Family Movement in China.

While the study of this particular movement holds a high level of interest for this critic, it also presents some difficulties. In order to adequately evaluate the influence of rhetoric on individual attitudes and behaviors, one must understand the cultural values, mores and traditions that shape those attitudes and behaviors. In addition, language itself presents a barrier as the critic must rely on transcriptions from Chinese to English. As for the question, "What is lost in the translation?" the critic cannot be certain, but in-depth examinations of the culture from both historical and sociological perspectives, the population problem in China, and translated print media sources, provide the critic with a broad understanding of the nature of the Chinese culture.

Further, it would seem that such cultural differences could be viewed situationally. Over 2000 years ago Aristotle noted that occasion and circumstance influence argument.[7] Herbert Simons, in 1980, states, "There will always be exceptions to the 'rules' and overlap among 'rhetorics,' but the principle that discourse must be adapted to particular types of situations remains eminently sound."[8] Thus, the critic is capable of examining the components of a foreign culture as a larger set of situational factors that will ultimately shape persuasive discourse. Working from such a foundation, the critic may avoid, to some extent, assessing rhetorical successes or failures based upon his/her own cultural constraints. For if the critic, through detailed research, can develop an understanding and sensitivity for historical settings in which s/he was not a participant, then s/he can develop the same type of understanding and sensitivity for the interaction of events and discourse in a foreign setting. While such study poses no easy path for the critic, it is a path that should be explored; as Lucas states, "until such study is undertaken in earnest, our understanding of the rhetoric of social movements will remain partial and parochial."[9]

The significance of this study of the one-child-per-family movement is two-fold. First, it provides insight into how rhetoric may function in a culture different from our own, which the previous discussion indicates is an area in need of examination. Second, it illustrates that cultural barriers are not as prohibitive as current movement literature suggests and thus, adds to and encourages further cross-cultural study. The purpose of this paper, then, is to examine the one-child-per-family movement utilizing Lloyd Bitzer's, "Functional Communication: A Situational Perspective" and attempt to draw some conclusions about its rhetorical success.[10]

Method

Publication of Lloyd F. Bitzer's "The Rhetorical Situation" in 1968 generated much discussion and controversy.[11] In 1980 Bitzer reformulated his concept into a more functional approach, and, regardless of the merits and demerits of situational theory, it seems to have great applicability to the study of social movements. Its applicability lies in the fact that the perspective allows the critic to describe and analyze rhetorical phenomena. Bitzer offers the critic a set of descriptive tools by which a social movement can be viewed as a rhetorical situation; these include exigence, audience and constraints.

According to Bitzer, a rhetorical situation cannot exist in the absence of a rhetorical exigence. Exigences become rhetorical when they are capable of modification and such modification requires messages that constrain audiences who can alter the exigence by their actions, thoughts and judgments. A particular situation may evoke a response, but if that response is not a rhetorical one, a rhetorical situation cannot exist. Since social movements as we know them generally arise in response to a perceived problem in a society, and since they use written and oral discourse to convey their views to audiences in order to encourage change, they clearly become rhetorical situations. The Woman's movement, the modern Civil Rights movement, the Anti-Nuclear movement and the Moral Majority all perceived an exigence and made a

rhetorical response. The emergence of a rhetorical exigence, then, allows for the possible inception of a social movement.

Bitzer's second key element is audience, those capable of being constrained to positively modify the exigence. Social movements clearly address an audience perceived as capable of modifying the exigence. They address large audiences to gain support for their causes. It is audience perception which influences the rhetorical choices made by the rhetor. Also, it is the degree of audience responsiveness which ultimately signals the beginning or termination of a movement.

Of course, one cannot discuss an audience without a discussion of a rhetor. While Bitzer speaks of a single rhetor, he does not deny the possibility of more than one speaker for a particular situation. This is valuable to the critic who wishes to study more than one spokesperson for a movement. It is the entrance of the rhetor and his/her discourse which presents the factual condition to the audience and initiates a sense of urgency about it, thus advancing the rhetorical situation and initiating a potential movement. Perceptions of the factual condition and its urgency on the part of the rhetor(s) and the audience will determine their responsiveness to the exigence.

It is difficult to discuss the rhetor and the audience without including Bitzer's final element, constraints—those elements having power to influence decision and action on the part of the audience. According to Bitzer, "The rhetor's central creative task is to discover and make use of proper constraints in his message in order that his response, in conjunction with other constraints operative in the situation, will influence the audience."[12] A movement may incorporate any number of constraints into languaging strategies to fit a particular situation in order to encourage responsiveness. Audience responsiveness includes those who respond positively and those who respond negatively, or perhaps not at all, and thus, determines audience factions. Responsiveness, then, accounts for what have come to be called counter-movements; for those who respond negatively to a proposed modification may perceive the

movement itself as an exigence. A prime example would be People For the American Way, as a reaction to the Moral Majority.

Thus, Bitzer's components offer the critic a means of identifying the variables of the situation surrounding social movements. By noting the primary exigence, the critic appreciates the conditions that gave birth to the movement (or whether a movement occurred at all); by noting any secondary exigences which emerged, the critic gains some notion of movement focus at a particular time; by identifying the audience(s) the critic gains a general knowledge of the nature and direction of messages and by identifying what appear to be the overriding constraints, the critic gains insight into the rhetor's perception of the exigence(s) and the audience(s) addressed.

Bitzer also extended his original formulation of situation with a four stage "evolution of situation". The four stages include: (1) Origin and Development of Constituents, (2) Maturity, (3) Deterioration, and (4) Disintegration.

Stage 1: Origin and Development of Constituents

According to Bitzer, "messages created during stage 1 will have a subordinate purpose grounded in a subordinate exigence: to cultivate an audience inasmuch as one is needed or to generate constraints which are lacking."[13] This seems correlated to the initial phase of any movement in decision of the primary audience to be addressed and the selection of constraints to infuse membership with a sense of urgency. If these attempts fail, a movement will not emerge.

Stage 2: Maturity

Bitzer identifies a situation as mature "when its constituents are present and in favorable relation to each other."[14] He further explains that "A situation may peak one or more times during this stage, the peaks occurring when the audience becomes particularly ready to respond and constraints become especially powerful."[15] This is clearly indicative of a movement in its most observable stage. The exigence is clear, the audience is being addressed and constraints are operating to give the movement its

modifying force. It is also possible, according to Bitzer, that in this phase the end of the movement might occur as the exigence is successfully modified.

Stage 3: Deterioration

Bitzer identifies deterioration as the stage "when constituents or relations change in ways that make modification of the exigence significantly more difficult."[16] There may be many reasons for this deterioration. The audience may become bored with the exigence; the movement may be threatened by a counter-movement; the audience may become unable to modify the exigence; constraints once powerful, may weaken or images once vivid and fresh may grow tedious. In any of these instances a movement will deteriorate to some degree; it may recover and mature, or move into a final stage of termination.

Stage 4: Disintegration

In this stage, according to Bitzer, "an audience no longer exists, sufficient constraints are no longer present, or the exigence can no longer be modified by means of messages."[17] Such a condition would indicate the end of a movement. Interest in the exigence has been lost and membership diminished. The movement would cease to be a modifying force.

These four stages offer the critic a means of organizing the progression of the movement historically, from beginning to end, and rhetorically, with situational components which characterize each stage. The critic needs to establish beginning and ending points for each stage. For example, at what point did Origin and Development give way to Maturity? If the movement is current, it is important for the critic to determine which stages have been completed and which are yet to come. The establishment of such boundaries is critical for clarification and organization of analysis.

The One-Child-Per-Family Movement

Exigence

The one-child-per-family movement is a response to a complex set of problems which can be best understood through a brief geographic review. China is a country equivalent in size to the United States with four times as many people, and one half the arable land. Its climate is highly unstable, and while China includes nearly one-quarter of the world population, it possesses only one-twentieth of our planet's fresh water supply.[18] According to Qian Xinzhong, Minister in Charge of the State Family Planning Commission, China's population has already exceeded one billion. If the current movement is successful, growth can be limited to 1.2 billion by the year 2000.[19] If population growth is not controlled, the total will be 1.3 billion or more. These figures have greater impact with the realization that each decimal point represents one hundred million people.

Control is increasingly difficult as the offspring of the baby booms which followed the 1950 and 1960 historical turmoils enter maturity. Xinzhong emphasizes that each year for the next eighteen years (from 1983) approximately eleven million couples will enter the age of marriage and child-bearing. If each couple produced only 2 children, the total by the year 2000 would be four hundred million; one-child-per-couple is imperative.[20]

For China, uncontrolled population growth would be economically detrimental. From 1962 to 1983, China experienced some economic growth, however, 30 percent of the increase in consumer goods was absorbed by the increase in population.[21] Further, the average grain increase per year was 8.6 million tons, which just met the average population growth.[22] If China can reduce the population growth to one percent (1.2 billion in 2000) the percentage of consumer goods absorbed by a growing population could be halved, and an additional 2.25 million tons of grain could be available for export, increasing economic growth and raising the standard of living.[23] If, however,

population growth continues uncontrolled, China would reach a point where supply could no longer meet demand, and starvation and poverty levels would be economically unmanageable.

Audience/Constraints

The most powerful constraint in this situation, and China's largest barrier to the success of the movement, is tradition. The Chinese people, particularly in the rural areas, have deeply rooted beliefs and values which present a challenge to rhetorical influence. These beliefs stem from the agricultural society which has dominated China for hundreds of years. Sixty percent of the total population farms in the rural regions, and those who have moved to the cities continue to follow the practices which developed in the farming society ages ago.[24] Channels of communication are not nearly as advanced or available in the rural areas as in the cities. The rural populace also lacks education, for the children are often kept at home to assist in the agricultural livelihood of the family.

There are three traditions which directly confront the one-child-per-family movement: the tradition of children providing old age security, the traditional belief that more sons provide more blessings, and the traditional belief that the ancestral line must be maintained. These will be examined in turn.

The years of high death rates cemented the idea in the populace that the more children a couple produce, the better their chances of having enough survivors to care for them in their old age. Large families were the norm in China for centuries and, until the early 1970's when China began the construction of a care program for the elderly, the only means of support for the aged was their offspring.

Strongly linked to this notion is "more sons, more blessings." This stems in part from the agricultural nature of the society, as males are more suited to work on the farm. It is also rooted in the society's patriarchal traditions which dictate that when a female marries, she moves to the home of her husband to live and bear children. Thus, daughters have less work value to the family in the long term. Sons, however, will

marry and bring a wife and children to the household, and are thereby considered a more valuable asset.

These partriarchal traditions carry with them the belief that blood lines and ancestry are passed from generation to generation by the male offspring; if a family produces only female children the particular heritage is believed lost forever. Couples are encouraged to pray for male offspring. If a first child is female, parents may feel compelled to try again, thus increasing the population burden.

Stage I: Origin and Development of Constituents

The current family planning movement in China began in the early 1970's, when the government gave national priority to the problem of overpopulation. The specific rhetorical appeal was "later, longer, fewer." This was the first attempt by the State to draw general attention to the problem of population control. 'Later' meant that young people were expected to delay marriage dates. Prior to this general directive, the Chinese operated under the Marriage Law of 1950, which stated the minimum ages as twenty for men and eighteen for women. Although the State did not set specific requirements, in 1971, many localities adopted more strict stipulations. In Rudong County, Jangsu Province, the age for marriage rose to twenty-five for men and twenty-three for women, and in other provinces it rose to twenty-six and twenty-four respectively. This postponement meant that women, even if they became pregnant in the second year of marriage could only produce four generations in the next hundred years, one less than if they became pregnant at twenty.[25] As explained by the State, "late marriage is not simply a matter of the individual or the family; it is related to the strategic task of controlling population growth in the country as a whole."[26] The term 'longer' referred to the space between births. This length was specified by the State at a minimum of four years as this would "prevent excessively dense child-bearing and lessen the burden on the family and State."[27] 'Fewer', of course, was the most emphasized with the "at most two, at best one" recommendation.

In 1972, after joining the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (U.N.), China declared, "It is in the interest of the people for a country to adopt a policy of planned growth of population . . . "[28] In 1973 at the 29th Session of the General Meeting of the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia, the Chinese delegation reported that "the government has set an objective . . . to reduce the growth rate to 1.5 percent per year in rural areas and to 1.0 percent per year in the cities . . . "[29] In this same year the government made birth control available free of charge. In conjunction, the State Family Planning Commission was established and given direct authority over birth control at all administrative levels. There are four administrative levels under the State Commission: 1) Family Planning Commissions of Provinces, Autonomous Regions and Municipalities, 2) Family Planning Commissions of Municipalities, 3) Family Planning Commissions of Counties, and 4) Family Planning leaders of communes and villages.[30] This system is equivalent to control at federal, state, county and local levels in the United States. These levels were designed to increase the number of communication channels and bring the message to the people face-to-face. This face-to-face strategy seems particularly appropriate given the low educational levels in rural areas where resistance was expected to be strongest.

The system functions in the following manner. Local birth planning committees, usually headed by either a full or part-time health worker, are composed of local women personally acquainted with the families of the jurisdiction. Meetings are then held to discuss the problems of family planning and, of course, the advantages of late marriage, appropriate contraceptives, abortion and sterilization. Based upon recency of marriage, the number of children and the time interval between them, these sessions establish planning targets for the community, specifying the year in which each couple has contracted to have a child. In some health centers there are large boards with the name of all the married women in reproductive ages, their menstrual cycles, the type of contraceptive used, the presence or absence of the husband, and the date of scheduled pregnancies. The local planning women then visit the homes of mothers and

potential mothers and, through face-to-face discussion guide and assist them in accepting, understanding and practicing birth control.[31]

By adopting this one-to-one strategy, the government avoided several potential difficulties, notably that information would fail to reach particular areas of the country. With county commissions establishing committees in all localities, the government was assured the message would be delivered. Additionally, misunderstandings could be handled immediately in direct conversation, and proper use of the recommended methods could be checked with great regularity.

According to Xinzhong, "all work is done by the people themselves. Only movements that trust in the masses, rely on the masses and use the massline will be successful."[32] An example of this strategy currently exists at the Peking Woolen Mill, where there are more than 350 birth control workers, two full-time, to watch over 975 women of child-bearing age. Women such as these monitor birth control choices, preplanned births and even workers' menstrual cycles. They also offer counseling and information on the family planning program. In rural areas, medical workers known as barefoot doctors perform these functions as well.[33] Since no program of this nature had ever existed, its very presence offered a sense of new concern over the problems of overpopulation.

By 1978 the government began to see results. The rate of natural population growth had dropped from 26 per 1000 in 1970 to 12.[34] While population experts in the West quibbled over the accuracy of the census statistics, it was obvious that China's family planning movement had gained support. Following this initial success, the government imposed stricter guidelines and directed additional rhetorical efforts toward more effective population control.

Stage 2: Maturity

In 1978 the movement reached maturity in that all constituents were in favorable relation to each other. As the House Committee on Foreign Affairs reported, "for the first time there seemed to be real congruency between the demographic theory . . . ,

the ideology of population growth espoused politically . . . , and the rationale used by people responsible for implementing the family planning policies."[35]

The Chinese government also realized that the goals established in the early seventies could be strengthened and established new goals of 0.5 percent population growth by 1985 and zero population growth in the year 2000.[36] Thus, the "one-couple, one-child" philosophy emerged in 1979 at the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress.[37] It was grounded in the notion that if a couple produced only one child, they insured the future of the State, while producing more than one child contributed to the economic detriment of the country.

This policy placed emphasis on "nationwide advocacy of one-child-per-couple, strict control of second births and resolute prevention of third births."[38] Additionally, the new constitution drafted in 1978 states, "The State promotes family planning . . . Both husband and wife are obliged to practice family planning . . . Late marriage and late childbirth should be encouraged. Close kin and persons with congenital and genetic diseases are prohibited from getting married."[39] In addition to this stringent stance, the government adopted an economic incentive program in hopes of inducing greater cooperation.

In 1980, the Family Planning Commission completed a draft of law on family planning including a new economic incentive and disincentive program. Though this draft was never published, it would appear the guidelines were communicated to the provinces as a few months later several provinces and cities published new policies. A summary of the planned parenthood regulations issued in February by the Standing Committee of the Guangdong People's Congress is presented here.[40]

The twenty-nine articles of the planned parenthood regulations are divided into six chapters. Chapter I is the preamble, which points out that planned parenthood is a major task in achieving the health and prosperity of the entire nation. It also contains a reminder that ideological education continues to be the main measure for promoting

planned parenthood and that "the necessary economic and adminstrative measures are secondary."

The 'ideological education' is based upon the "Three Emphases" as drafted by Xinzhong, Minister of the State Commission:

> "Emphasis on publicity and education: the adoption of family planning aims not only at the transformation from a birth anarchy to the planned stage, but also at the change of traditional concepts relating to childbearing such as 'Men are superior to women, more sons are more blessings,' and so on. Publicity and education are important means of changing peoples' ideas about childbearing. We utilize various approaches in publicity and education: premarital examinations which include instruction in late marriage, late childbearing and fewer births, activities of comparative calculation (food, natural resources, the economy) so that these vivid and concrete illustrations will enable the masses to realize the benefit of family planning in relation to the interests of the individual, the public and the nation as a whole.
>
> Emphasis on contraception: Induced abortion may cause suffering to women and an undesireable affect on their health. We promote contraception as the main method of controlling births because it provides better protection for the physical and mental health of women.
>
> Emphasis on constant work: Only when we work persistently, intensively, and carefully shall we be able to consolidate the results already achieved and further develop the work."

Chapter II of the regulations is entitled "Marriage and Parenthood." It lists the ages for late marriage as over twenty-three for females and over twenty-five for males in rural areas and over 26 for males in the urban areas. A late birth is one in which the woman is over twenty-five years of age; if a second birth "conforms to the population plan" it should come

at least four years after the birth of the first child. An individual marrying for the second time who has children by an earlier marriage may not have more. Educational institutions can enroll only unmarried students; students who marry or give birth while in school will be expelled.

Chapter III lists the commendations and rewards. Couples who make the commitment to have only one child will be issued an "only child preferential treatment certificate." This gives the parent several options based upon their rural or urban location.

Urban parents may choose free schooling kindergarten through senior middle school (8th grade) and free medical care until the child reaches the age of fourteen, or they may receive an extra five yuan a month ($7.50 American currency). Rural parents may choose free schooling kindergarten through senior middle school and free medical care until the child reaches the age of fourteen, or an additional 4 to 6 labor days per month until the child reaches the age of fourteen. In urban areas one-child families will receive priority housing, fuel and nonstaple foodstuffs equivalent to a two-child family. In the rural areas there are even greater benefits for one-child families. A one-child couple in a rural area will receive an adult grain ration for the child plus an extra two-person portion of a private plot. These parents receive priority in housing and building materials, work assignments in industry and sideline occupations. A rural only-child will, upon reaching adulthood, receive priority in recruitment as an industrial worker or soldier.

All one-child parents will receive monthly bonuses when they retire; childless parents will be fully taken care of by the government or collective. Individuals engaged in planned parenthood and the units themselves will receive monthly bonuses if 'notable successes' in the program are achieved. Additionally, male peasants are encouraged to settle in the household of the bride, especially if she is an only child. As an alternative, the aged parents of the wife can move to the production team where the

daughter is living. Furthermore, a son-in-law responsible for caring for his wife's parents will be regarded as a direct relative and receive land and grain rations accordingly.

Chapter IV lists the penalties which may be incurred. Primarily, if the parents break their pledge and have a second child, their wages or work points will be docked until all costs have been recovered. Further, charges amounting to ten percent of annual income will be levied on parents should the wife become pregnant within four years of the first birth. These charges will run from the fourth month of pregnancy until the child is fourteen. Births out of wedlock are illegal, and in such cases similar charges will be levied from the fourth month of pregnancy until nine months after a marriage certificate is obtained. The wages and work points collected in this way will go into welfare funds from which the bonuses for the one-child families will be drawn. Grain rations purchased for children outside the plan will be more expensive for the first fourteen years, and those children will not receive cloth coupons. Urban parents of unplanned children will not get promotions, and rural parents will not be considered for employment in industry or sideline occupations. All medical costs associated with a pregnancy which falls outside the unit's plan must be borne by the parents.

Chapter V lists a variety of incentives and benefits that will be granted for an IUD insertion, and abortion (when necessary) or sterilization. Chapter VI, titled "Additions" points out that it is the duty of every citizen to practice planned parenthood and the responsibility of every organization and enterprise to promote it. Additionally, it notes that leaders of regions that excel in meeting standards will be recognized and rewarded accordingly.

While the preamble's ideological considerations describe some rather lofty ideals of how population goals should be achieved, the economic incentive and disincentive program seems to dictate that they will be ahcieved by means other than education. Both the Three Emphases and the incentive program are aimed at the same ends, but the means to those ends appear dichotomous. Indeed, the contradictions presented by

the incentive program may provide an explanation for the deterioration of the movement.

Stage 3: Deterioration

Deterioration occurs when modifications of the exigence becomes significantly more difficult, and in China, the 1980's brought several new confounding problems to light. In 1981 and 1982 the rate of natural growth increased from the 12 per 1000 rate in 1979 to 14.5 per 1000.[41] Also, a secondary exigence emerged in rising female infanticide rates, stemming from the traditional preference for male offspring. Since the government had limited couples to one-child, they preferred males. In Anhui province the papers reported that in 1981, 563 of 1000 surviving infants were male, and that male infants made up 58 to 64 percent of the surviving total that year.[42] This percentage was unusually high given that the norm for any population is a larger percentage of surviving female offspring. In China, however, male offspring accounted for more than half the surviving total, indicating that there was more at work than natural selection.[43] Both the upsurge in the natural growth rate and the rise in female infanticide may have been linked to the implementation of the incentive program.

The strongest resistance to the one-child incentive program has come from the rural areas where economic factors continue to encourage large families.[44] For example, grain rations are still distributed on a per capita basis and the size of private plots is also directly related to family size. In this system it is not more pay for more work, but more pay for more births.

This rationing on a per capita basis also encourages the continued preference for sons rather than daughters as sons will marry and increase the household. The proposal for husbands to move to the home of the wife has met much resistance and little success. Another reason male children are valued above females is that men still occupy most of the important positions in communities and are better compensated for their work. Though China has implemented a policy of equal pay for equal work, in the countryside women doing the same work as men generally receive 60 to 80 percent of

men's pay.[45] Given these factors it is not surprising that couples limited to one child preferred a male and that the female infanticide rate rose. Those convicted of murdering female infants are generally sent to prison; however, Chinese newspapers have indicated that terms are usually from three to four years. In a society where adultery carries a life term, this hardly seems a strict admonishment. Not only does the policy imply a coercive tone on the part of the State, but it provides rewards for individuals who achieve successes in family planning, and thus has led to a problem with overzealous leaders who use coercive means to achieve their birth quotas.

The use of coercion is not widely publicized by the Chinese, but examples have been documented. There are general descriptions of "lengthy meetings which eventually succeed in convincing a woman with an unscheduled pregnancy to get an abortion, or groups of people entering the home of a mother to 'mobilize her' for abortion or sterlization."[46] More specifically, a young woman confided to a reporter from The Wall Street Journal that during her second pregnancy, she was visited day and night by birth control workers and others in notable positions trying to convince her to abort. Initially she refused, but eventually she could no longer endure the pressure and consented to an abortion in her seventh month of pregnancy.[47]

Even more startling are these passages from a letter written to a Hong Kong magazine after birth control workers came to a young man's village:

> "All those women who have already had 2 births, who are below 40 and whose youngest child is less than 8 must adopt the ligation method. Those who already have loops inserted must take out the loops and use ligation, otherwise food grains will be denied the whole family or even the family's property will be removed and the women will in the end still not be able to escape the treatment . . . there were actually some who were bound to a flat carriage and pulled to the health center for the operation . . . It seems that if the county and municipal authorities continue to handle the

matter in such a single-minded way, they are bound to reap their own bitter fruit."[48]

Written in 1980, these final words had a rather prophetic quality as the early 1980's did see the movement's impact deteriorate with the increased natural growth rate and the problems arising from the incentive program. However, this deterioration did not escape the attention of the Chinese government for in 1983 they launched a campaign to revitalize the movement.

Revitalization

The strategy for the revitalization of the movement is two-fold--a rhetorical return to the first of the "Three Emphases--Emphasis on publicity and education," and a softening of the incentive program.

Xinzhong and other family planning workers declared January 1983, National Family Planning Month, and embarked upon a new campaign. According to an account in China Reconstructs, a monthly periodical, "Instead of lecturing parents; they sought to reaffirm their commitment in a vital national effort."[49] Another popular periodical, The Beijing Review (formerly Peking Review) carried articles praising the population policies. The rhetoric was abundant with assurances that though there are "great difficulties (the goal) can be reached so long as we throw in all our might," and policy implementations are "certain to ensure a job well done for family planning."[50] China Reconstructs reassured that "Handled correctly, China's huge population will not hinder but motivate socio-economic development."[51] Also appearing were articles on advances being made for children in health care networks and youth parent organizations.[52]

China has also instituted measures to help upgrade the status of women in society. Informational and recruitment efforts were made to attain higher female attendance in primary schools, but a 40-60 ratio is still not uncommon.[53] In 1984, a new magazine was published entitled Women of China. The issues portray women in non-traditional roles and responsibilities. The promotion reads:

> "Women's independence and emancipation--portrayal of women at various posts; marriage and family--husband and wife sharing ideals; respect for the elderly, care for the young; family planning--late marriage, birth control, one-child family; child education; women in Chinese history and legends."[54]

Each of these statements emphasizes the positive role of women in the society and their value in the success of the one-child movement. China also formed a Women's Federation whose primary purpose is to upgrade the positions held by women in Chinese society. According to China Reconstructs they are fighting to "eliminate the discrimination against women still sometimes practiced by colleges and work units."[55]

Issues of periodicals in 1983 and 1984 also directed attention to the security of the aged and the planning of old age homes. One description read, "the nation had altogether 10,600 homes for the aged in the countryside, most of them were brick houses with spacious courtyards and flowers and trees." The article continues, "the old people were all fed and clothed and received medical treatment when needed."[56]

These media efforts were also accompanied by an onslaught of publicity oriented paraphernalia. According to the July 6, 1983 Wall Street Journal, there were red banners strung across roads in cities and towns proclaiming the joys of family planning. Posters of smiling mothers holding one fat happy girl encouraged families to love their daughters and not hope for a son. "You can light your cigarettes with birth control matches (It is good to have only one child), fan yourself with birth control fans and blow your nose with birth control handkerchiefs."[57]

This wide-reaching persuasive campaign has continued to the present. Joyce K. Kallgren, chairman for the Center of Chinese Studies at the Univeristy of California, Berkeley notes:

> There are propaganda messages transmitted by means of books, radio, and television, and party efforts to tell members, candidates and cadres to

endorse and support the policy. Billboards, magazines and television shows extol the single child family . . . [58]

Kallgren further notes the development of extensive educational programs dealing with child rearing, child care and standards of conduct for the single child. In addition, in the fall of 1985 sex education classes were offered for the first time in more than 40 secondary schools in Shanghai.[59] The program was hailed by the People's Daily as an obvious "break with taboos."[60] According to Beijing Review the program, at that time, was already tentatively scheduled for 400 more secondary schools.[61] Clearly, this is an attempt to shape attitudes about sex and birth control before marriage age.

Not only have educational programs increased, but the incentive program has become more flexible in that exceptions to the one-child rule have become more common, according to recent State rhetoric. In June of 1985 a spokesman for the State Family Planning Commission stated, "The one-child policy is an interim measure inapplicable to rural families with special difficulties, who may have two children . . . "[62] In an address given on March 1, 1986, Vice Prime Minister Wan Li emphasized the need for family planning leaders to be sensitive to local conditions. He praised successful efforts and reaffirmed the need to reduce the coercive aspects of the program. He also noted that in less populated rural areas where children are required for labor, 'hardship' can be presumed and exceptions granted.[63] As Kallgren summarizes, "It is clear that the leadership has become increasingly aware of the need for exceptions to the single-child policy."[64]

This two-fold strategy appears to have halted deterioration and reestablished the maturity of the movement. In 1985 (most current figures) the national rate of growth was 10.81 per 1000, significant decrease from the 14.5 per 1000 in 1982.[65] The China Official Yearbook 85/86 reported that 34 of the 35 million married couples on record in 1984 had pledged to have no more than one child. Eighty-three percent of all new

births in the city and sixty-two percent in the rural areas are single child births.[66] A 1985 opinion poll conducted in Jiansu, China's most populated province indicated an attitudinal shift, finding that "many women now believe more children mean more hardship—not more happiness, as Chinese tradition would have it."[67] Additionally, the rhetoric aimed at elevating the status of women combined with the allowance for two children in some areas, appears to have been effective in reducing the incidence of female infanticide. Wan Li noted that such drastic compliance measures are less frequent as a result of the educational efforts of the State Family Planning Commission.[68] While the intent of Li may be scrutinized, a review of print media in recent years reveals a marked decrease in such reports.

While these results indicate progress, they should not be interpreted as an end to China's problems. Rural areas, where education is lacking and traditions are deeply rooted, still lag behind in meeting family planning goals. However, the progress made by the movement since its inception in the early 1970's is noteworthy in terms of decreased population growth and the reduced influence of tradition. As Kallgren states, " . . . Chinese population policies seem to have overcome many of the inherent cultural, social and economic objections of a Confucian rural society."[69]

Several conclusions seem warranted by this examination. First, that the one-child-per family movement in China has been successful in influencing the attitudes and behaviors of the populace. The government has developed a systematic network of communication that appears to be overcoming barriers of information dissemination and traditional life. The most recent campaign which emphasizes education and new traditions has been particularly successful as through increased rhetorical efforts the government halted deterioration and reestablished maturity.

Second, Bitzer's situational perspective appears to have great utility for the critic of social movements. The four evolutionary stages Bitzer presents provide a guiding framework for viewing a movement from its origin to its disintegration. While this study examined multiple stages, a single stage analysis might prove equally as

valid. For example, a study of the origin and development stages of several different movements could offer a basis of comparison. Additionally, the model offers the critic an effective means of organizing the numerous rhetorical artifacts of a movement into a structure which might identify increased or decreased movement activity and the resulting effects on audience and exigence. These are valuable attributes as movement literature clearly indicates the need for more frameworks for systematic study.

Finally, this study has examined the strategies and effects of rhetoric in the Chinese culture and shown that through detailed research of a culture's traditions and values, insight can be gained into two rhetoric functions within that culture. Culture, then, may be viewed as a component which shapes and affects any rhetorical situation.

It is the hope of this critic that endeavors of this kind will continue to emerge. Social movements are undeniably an integral part of social change; and by viewing how rhetoric functions to influence and change societies, we will gain a better understanding of society and ourselves.

ENDNOTES

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[3]Charles A. Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," Central States Speech Journal 27 (Summer 1976) : 88.

[4]Suzanne Volmar Riches and Malcolm O. Sillars, "The Status of Movement Criticism," Western Journal of Speech Communication 44 (Fall 1980) : 287.

[5]Stephen E. Lucas, "Coming to Terms with Movement Studies," Central States Speech Journal 31 (Winter 1980) : 255-266.

[6]Lucas, "Coming to Terms," p. 265.

[7]Lane Cooper, The Rhetoric of Aristotle (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1932), pp. 1-4.

[8]Herbert W. Simons, "On Terms, Definitions and Theoretical Distinctiveness: Comments on Papers by McGee and Zarefsky," Central States Speech Journal 31 (Winter 1980) : 307.

[9]Lucas, "Coming to Terms," p. 265.

[10]Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Functional Communication: A Situational Perspective," in Rhetoric in Transition, ed. Eugene E. White (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980), pp. 24-41.

[11]Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric 1 (Winter 1968) : 1-14. For further discussion of Bitzer see: Richard Larson, "Lloyd Bitzer's 'Rhetorical Situation' and the Classification of Discourse," Philosophy and Rhetoric 3 (Winter 1970) : 165-168; K. E. Wilkerson, "On Evaluating Theories of Rhetoric," Philosophy and Rhetoric 3 (Winter 1970) : 82-96; Arthur B. Miller, "Rhetorical Exigence," Philosophy and Rhetoric (Spring 1972) : 111-118; Ralph Pomeroy, "Fitness of Response in Bitzer's Concept of Rhetorical Discourse," Georgia Speech Communication Journal 4 (1972) : 42-71; Richard Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric 6 (Summer 1973) : 154-161; Scott Consigny, "Rhetoric and its Situations," Philosophy and Rhetoric 7 (Summer 1974) : 175-184; David M. Hunsaker and Craig R. Smith, "The Nature of Issues: A Constructive Approach to Situational Rhetoric," Western Speech 40 (Summer 1976) : 144-156; John Patton, "Causation and Creativity in Rhetorical Situations," Quarterly Journal of Speech 65 (February 1979) : 36-55; Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Forum: Bitzer on Tompkins and Patton," Quarterly Journal of Speech 66 (February 1980) : 89-93; John H. Patton, "The Forum: Patton on Tompkins," Quarterly Journal of Speech 66 (February 1980) : 88-90; Phillip K. Tompkins, "The Forum: Tompkins on Patton and Bitzer," Quarterly Journal of Speech 66 (February 1980) : 85-88; Alan Brinton, "Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric," Philosophy and Rhetoric 14 (Fall 1981) : 234-248.

[12]Bitzer, "Functional Communication," pp. 26-27.

[13]Ibid., p. 37.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid., p. 38.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Paul Ehrlich and Anne Ehrlich, "Ecoscience Column," Mother Earth News 17 (May/June 1983) : 150.

[19]Qian Xinzhong, "China's Population Policy: Theory and Methods," Studies in Family Planning 14 (December 1983) : 297.

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[25]Huo Wenruo, China's Population: Problems and Prospects, eds. Liu Zheng and Song Jian (Beijing: New World Press, 1981), pp. 69-70.

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[27]Xinzhong, "China's Population Policy."

[28]Yu, "The Population Policy of China," p. 127.

[29]Ibid., p. 128.

[30]Xinzhong, "China's Population Policy," p. 300.

[31]U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, China's Population Policies and Population Data: Review and Update. H. Rept. 1981, 37th Cong., 1st sess., p. 9.

[32]Xinzhong, "China's Population Policy," p. 299.

[33]Amanda Bennett, "China Cajoles Families and Offers Incentives to Reduce Birth Rate," The Wall Street Journal, (6 July 1983), p. 1.

[34]Wenruo, China's Population, pp. 64, 68.

[35]House Committee on Foreign Affairs, China's Population Policies, p. 12.

[36]Ibid., p. 13.

[37]Xinzhong, "China's Population Policy," p. 297.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Yu, "The Population Policy of China," pp. 128-129.

[40]House Committee on Foreign Affairs, China's Population Policies, pp. 13-15; Xinzhong, "China's Population Policy," p. 299.

[41]Ibid., p. 298.

[42]Bennett, "China Cajoles Families," p. 23.

[43]While no exact statistics on the degree of increase specific to female infanticide in China prior to 1980 are available, most population experts agree the norm for populations is approximately 3 surviving females to one male. "The Slaughter of Innocents Still Goes On," Far Eastern Economic Review 120 (28 April 1983) : 50.

[44]House Committee on Foreign Affairs, China's Popultion Policies, p. 12.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Ibid., p 17.

[47]Bennett, "China Cajoles Families," p. 23.

[48]House Committee on Foreign Affairs, China's Population Policies, p. 18.

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[53]U. S. Congress, House Committee on International Relations, China's Birth Rate, Death Rate and Population Growth: Report, H. Rept., 1977, 95th Cong., 1st sess., p. 10.

[54]Beijing Review 27 (2 April 1984) : back cover.

[55]Kequing, "Problems and Prospects," p. 31.

[56]Du Renzhi, "Old People in China: Hopes and Problems," Beijing Review 27 (11 April 1984) : 31-32.

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[59]"Education on Sex," Beijing Review 28 (18 November 1985) : 9.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Ibid., p. 9.

[62]"Family Planning Policy Improves," Beijing Review 29 (14 July 1986) : 5.

[63]"Speech by Wan Li at the National Meeting for Commending Advanced Collectives and Individuals in Family Planning," Foreign Broadcast Information Service - China (5 March 1986) : pp. K4-7.

[64]Kallgren, "Family Planning," p. 272.

[65]Ibid., p. 271.

[66]Ibid.

[67]"Family Planning Policy Improves," p. 5.

[68]"Speech by Wan Li," p. K6.

[69]Kallgren, "Family Planning," p. 271.